Amendment to the Claims

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 15 and 17 as follows:

1. (Original) A method for visually indicating a voice speaker to a listener in a context of a computing session, comprising the steps of:

(a)   obtaining a speaker identifier that identifies a voice speaker who is transmitting voice data;

(b)   associating the speaker identifier with a visual indicator representing the voice speaker in the computing session; and

(c)   displaying the visual indicator to the listener to indicate the voice speaker who is speaking.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the visual indicator comprises at least one of:

(a)   an icon displayed adjacent to a visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker in the computing session;

(b)   an icon displayed in a predetermined position on a display to the listener to indicate the voice speaker;

(c)   an icon displayed adjacent to an identifier of the voice speaker; and

(d)   a change in an appearance of the visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker in the computing session.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying comprises the steps of:

(a)   displaying an icon adjacent to a visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker in the computing session if the visual element is visible on a display to the listener; and

(b)   displaying an icon that identifies the voice speaker if the visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker is not visible on the display to the listener.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein prior to the step of displaying, further comprising the step of determining whether the listener has elected to hear voice communications from the voice speaker.

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5. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the step of determining comprises at least one of the steps of:

      (a)   determining whether the listener has muted voice communications from the voice speaker; and

      (b)   determining whether the voice speaker provided evidence that the voice speaker is trusted by the listener, so that voice communications from the voice speaker are allowed to be heard by the listener.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein prior to the step of displaying, further comprising the step of determining whether the listener is prohibited from hearing voice communications from the voice speaker.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the step of determining comprises at least one of the steps of:

      (a)   determining whether the voice speaker has been muted in the computing session; and

      (b)   determining whether the voice speaker is restricted from voice communication as a result of one of an event occurring in the computing session and a status of the computing session.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising at least one of the steps of:

      (a)   modifying the voice data as a function of a status of at least one of the voice speaker and the listener in the computing session; and

      (b)   modifying the voice data as a function of a predefined characteristic selected by the voice speaker.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of mixing the voice data from the voice speaker with voice data from another voice speaker to provide the listener with a multi-voice communication.

10. (Original) A memory medium on which are stored machine instructions for carrying out the steps of Claim 1.

11. (Original) A memory medium on which are stored machine instructions for carrying out the steps of Claim 2.

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12. (Original) A system for visually indicating a voice speaker to a listener in a context of a computing session, comprising:

(a)   a processor;

(b)   a display in communication with the processor; and

(c)   a memory in communication with the processor, said memory storing machine instructions that cause the processor to carry out a plurality of functions, including:

(i)   obtaining a speaker identifier from voice data transmitted by the voice speaker;

(ii)   associating the speaker identifier with a visual indicator used for indicating the voice speaker; and

(iii)   displaying the visual indicator on the display to indicate that the voice speaker is speaking.

13. (Original) The system of Claim 12, wherein the visual indicator comprises at least one of:

(a)   an icon displayed adjacent to a visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker in the computing session;

(b)   an icon displayed in a predetermined position on a display to the listener to indicate the voice speaker;

(c)   an icon displayed adjacent to an identifier of the voice speaker; and

(d)   a change in an appearance of the visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker in the computing session.

14. (Original) The system of Claim 12, wherein the machine instructions further cause the processor to carry out the functions of:

(a)   displaying an icon adjacent to a visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker in the computing session if the visual element is visible on a display to the listener; and

(b)   displaying an icon that identifies the voice speaker if the visual element that is controlled by the voice speaker is not visible on the display to the listener.

15. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 12, wherein prior to displaying the visual indicator, the machine instructions further cause the processor to carry out the function of determining whether the listener has elected to hear voice communications from the voice speaker.

16. (Original) The system of Claim 15, wherein the machine instructions further cause the processor to carry out at least one of the functions of:

(a)   determining whether the listener has muted voice communications from the voice speaker; and

(b)   determining whether the voice speaker provided evidence that the voice speaker is trusted by the listener, so that voice communications from the voice speaker are allowed to be heard by the listener.

17. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 12, wherein prior to displaying the visual indicator, the machine instructions further cause the processor to carry out the function of determining whether the listener is prohibited from hearing voice communications from the voice speaker.

18. (Original) The system of Claim 17, wherein the machine instructions further cause the processor to carry out at least one of the functions of:

(a)   determining whether the voice speaker has been muted in the computing session; and

(b)   determining whether the voice speaker is restricted from voice communication as a result of one of an event occurring in the computing session and a status of the computing session.

19. (Original) The system of Claim 12, wherein the machine instructions further cause the processor to carry out at least one of the functions of:

(a)   modifying the voice data as a function of a status of at least one of the voice speaker and the listener in the computing session; and

(b)   modifying the voice data as a function of a predefined characteristic selected by the voice speaker.

20. (Original) The system of Claim 12, wherein the machine instructions further cause the processor to carry out the function of mixing the voice data from the voice speaker with voice data from another voice speaker to provide the listener with a multi-voice communication.

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